

FIG. 7  
Stylized dragons, architectural antefixes  
from Chien Dan, Quang Nam province,  
11th century.



(1345), the *Song shi*; “During the Xian-de reign of the Zhou, the official Pu-he-san who had been sent by their king, She-li Yin-de-man [likely the Buddhist king Indravarman, according to the translator] offered tribute of local products. These included a rhinoceros-horn belt in the form of clods and dragons, as well as a Pu-sa (Bodhisattva) stone.”<sup>27</sup> The Chinese frequently gave weaponry and metal horse trappings to the Champa delegates on their departure, thus giving us an instance of the exchange of metalwork.<sup>28</sup>

Because Vietnamese monuments contemporary with the temples of Champa have been destroyed by centuries of war, we cannot analyze and compare their style or architectural development with that of the Cham temples. Recent excavations in Ha Noi of the ancient citadel of Thang Long (eleventh-sixteenth centuries) may provide us more clues. One stylistic similarity between northern Dai Viet and Champa architecture that the excavation of the Thang Long site has indicated is the large number of terra-cotta dragon heads that functioned as architectural decoration at Thang Long. More simplified dragons, possibly from a slightly earlier period, were found at Tra Kieu, and a simplified dragon form was a typical motif on the spire of many temples, not only of the Thu Bon river area (fig. 7), but farther south as well. Whether these architectural embellishments on temples were the result of influence from north Vietnamese or Chinese taste cannot be immediately ascertained, but another finding at the Thang Long site—bricks inscribed with Cham characters—indicates a definite connection with Champa and places Cham workers at the site. Evidence also exists to confirm that Cham musicians, dancers, and singers, captured during war, influenced the performing arts of slightly later periods.<sup>29</sup> We might surmise that north Vietnamese prisoners played a similar role in cultural developments in Champa, though the Cham eye turned more directly toward India in the overall conception of their temples than toward the north.

While the concept of temple construction in Southeast Asia and the reliance on religious texts that dictated details of that construction came from India, Southeast Asians adopting Hinduism and Buddhism quickly created their own local variations of the temple plan and the iconography

FIG. 8  
Basement relief with dancer, Chien Dan  
temple, Quang Nam province, 11th century.

